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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/935,487	08/23/2001	Robert F. Rioux	BSC-187 (1002/257)	1401

21323 7590 02/15/2005

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EXAMINER

PELLEGRINO, BRIAN E

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 02/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-4,6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Evard et al. (WO 97/27898) in view of Yachia et al. (5246445). Evard et al. illustrates (Fig. 2') a coil segment with a middle portion **14** spaced from the proximal and distal windings and has a diameter less than the proximal and distal ends. Evard et al. disclose a covering or what can be interpreted as "webbing" such that a portion or the entire device is encapsulated or covered by the covering, page 33, lines 5-8. It can be interpreted from the disclosure of Evard on page 14, lines 22-25 that these coverings inhibit ingrowth of body tissue. Evard also discloses the coil can be a biocompatible wire made from steel or nickel titanium, page 34, lines 1-3. Evard additionally discloses that the different features of various embodiments are capable of being combined to form embodiments not shown, page 45, lines 31-36. Please note the intended use, as set forth in the claims, carries no weight in the absence of any distinguishing structure. Clearly, the device is capable of being positioned coaxially within the body lumen of a patient. However, Evard does not disclose a cross-sectional area of the wire within the range of 0.0079mm^2 to 7.1mm^2 or separation of the windings within the range of 4mm to 10mm or the use of hooks at each of the proximal and distal ends of the prosthetic device. Yachia et al. teach a cross-sectional area of 0.0079mm^2 to 0.785mm^2 and a separation of the windings with a range 0.5 to *about* 2mm, col. 4, lines 44,45,49-52. In

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this instance Yachia's coil spacing between windings of *about* 2mm is close enough to be considered to be about 4mm. See MPEP 2144.05. Yachia et al. also teach (Fig. 1a) a stent with hooks 3 at both the proximal and distal ends of the coil body for connection to a delivery system, col. 6, lines 13-16. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a wire with the cross-sectional area and spacing distance of about 4mm between windings as taught by Yachia et al. with the device of Evard et al. in order to provide some flexibility by having some distance between windings, but also some greater structural support with the larger cross-sectional area wire. It would also have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate hooks at both proximal and distal ends of a stent as taught Yachia et al. in the device of Evard et al. such that the vessel apparatus does not dislodge from the instrument used to implant it. The addition of the hooks enables the surgeon to precisely place the vessel-opening device in its location without the apparatus being displaced during insertion.

Claims 7,8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Evard et al. (WO 97/27898) in view of Yachia et al. '445 as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Hachtman et al. (5645559). Evard et al. as modified by Yachia et al. is explained supra. Evard does disclose that silicone can be used in sleeves placed on stent devices, page 17, lines 21-24. However, Evard as modified by Yachia does not disclose a low durometer silicone within the range of 0-60D. Hachtman et al. also teach that a silicone layer is placed on the stent to provide a barrier that prevents the growth of tissue through the stent and to support the flow of fluid through the lumen, col. 2,

lines 14-18. Hachtman et al. also teach that low durometer silicone, such as 30D is placed on a stent, col. 4, lines 49-52. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a low durometer silicone as taught by Hachtman et al. for the silicone on Evard's vessel apparatus as modified by Yachia such that fluid flow is maintained through the lumen of the device while preventing tissue ingrowth.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 11/15/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants assert that the prior art upper limit of "about 2mm" for the coil spacings does not overlap the claimed lower limit of "about 4mm". However, these distances are so close that it is obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. MPEP 2144.05 states a prima facie case of obviousness exists where the claimed ranges and prior art ranges do not overlap but are *close enough* that one skilled in the art would have expected them to have the same properties. *Titanium Metals Corp. of America v. Banner*, 778 F.2d 775, 227 USPQ 773 (Fed. Cir. 1985). Yachia teaches the same structural wire is used for the stent as claimed and Applicants have provided no evidence that Yachia's wire would not function in the same way as the claimed device. It should also be noted that the Applicant's disclosure (paragraph 9) includes a range (0.5 to 10mm) that overlaps the range disclosed by Yachia (0.1 to 2mm) for the spacings. Applicants assert Yachia teaches away of providing a greater winding space in the coil, but the Applicants fail to state what is considered "greater". Since Yachia teaches a range that overlaps Applicant's disclosure, any minor variation in the spacing distance

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must not be significantly different. Furthermore, it is the Examiner's position that Yachia's disclosure of a preferred embodiment does not teach away from the entire disclosure of the patent, all of which must be considered in the analysis of obviousness. See *In re Burckel*, 201 USPQ 67, 70. Yachia provides one recitation of the spacing distance, but it should be noted that discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233.

In response to applicant's arguments against the Hachtman reference individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Therefore, the rejection of claims 7 and 8 over Evard et al. in view of Yachia et al. and further in view of Hachtman et al. is proper and is only used for the teachings as cited above in the rejection.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

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extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian E Pellegrino whose telephone number is 571-272-4756. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30am to 4pm. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached at 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TC 3700, AU 3738

Primary Examiner

Brian Pellegrino

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Pellegrino".